

VZCZCXYZ0005  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHTV #1640 2050758  
ZNY SSSSS ZZH  
P 240758Z JUL 09  
FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2769  
INFO RUCQAAA/USCINCCENT INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEHEG/AMEMBASSY CAIRO 4360

S E C R E T TEL AVIV 001640

NOFORN  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DNG: CO 07/22/2019  
TAGS: [PTER](#) [PREL](#) [EG](#) [IS](#)  
SUBJECT: GENERAL GILAD DEBRIEFS AMBASSADOR ON EGYPT MEETINGS

Classified By: Ambassador James B. Cunningham; reasons 1.5 b/d

11. (S/NF) During their July 23 meeting, Ministry of Defense PolMil Bureau Director Amos Gilad updated the Ambassador on Gilad's recent meetings with senior Egyptian security officials. Gilad said he had met with Intelligence Minister Soliman's deputy, Mohammed Ibrahim over breakfast for three hours on July 13 and had pressed him on why Egypt is pushing for Palestinian unity. Gilad said he had told Ibrahim that Hamas wants to swallow the Palestinian Authority, adding that Egypt's strategy seemed to be to help them do so. According to Gilad, Ibrahim said "Hamas is the enemy and we want to get rid of them." Ibrahim argued that Israel had not achieved that goal through either military action or economic embargo, so now Egypt was trying to use the political track. Gilad said he replied that Israel was enjoying unprecedented security cooperation with the Palestinian Authority at present, and Egyptian efforts, if successful, would force an end to that cooperation, particularly if unity was achieved at the cost of releasing Hamas terrorists into the West Bank. Gilad said Ibrahim could not give him a clear answer on why Egypt believed that the PA, rather than Hamas, would dominate in a unity government, or how sanctioning a governing role for Hamas would result in its destruction.

12. (S/NF) Gilad said he and General Eshel (J5) had also met with Egyptian Defense Minister Tantawi at the latter's request to give him a briefing on why Israel did not believe Egypt's anti-smuggling efforts in the Sinai were effective. Gilad said Eshel made a detailed, very direct presentation -- including use of imagery -- on what Israel knew about arms smuggling through the Rafah tunnels. Gilad said Tantawi promised to "reconsider" Egypt's anti-smuggling efforts, but Gilad doubted much would change. The Ambassador asked whether Tantawi had agreed to set up the joint military team to coordinate anti-smuggling efforts, as the Israelis had proposed. Gilad said he had not. In addition to the Sinai/Rafah operations issues, Gilad said he had asked Tantawi to reconsider the Egyptian military's stance toward Israel, noting that, despite the long-standing peace agreement, Egypt's military exercises, training and rhetoric continued to treat Israel as the enemy. Gilad said for the first time, Tantawi did not disagree, but simply noted how sensitive the Egyptian leadership needed to be to "the Street." Gilad characterized Tantawi as religious, honest, conservative and in a unique position in the Egyptian political elite. Gilad said Tantawi was a difficult person to influence, but that he would listen to CENTCOM Commander Petraeus.

13. (S/NF) Gilad said he believed Intelligence Minister Soliman was in Washington this week, but that the two planned to meet on July 25. Gilad stressed several times that the Soliman should not come away from Washington with the impression that the USG favors a unity Palestinian government.

\*\*\*\*\*  
Visit Embassy Tel Aviv's Classified Website:  
<http://www.state.sgov.gov/p/nea/telaviv>  
\*\*\*\*\*  
CUNNINGHAM